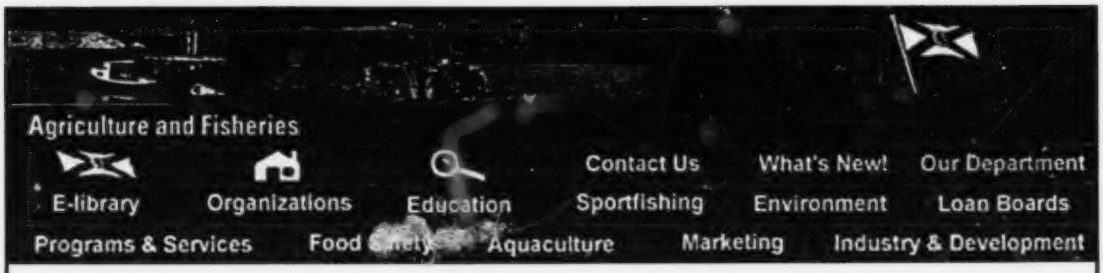

Business Plan 2003–04

Release Date: April 1, 2003

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◆ MESSAGE FROM MINISTER AND DEPUTY MINISTER

I am pleased to present the 2003-04 Business Plan for the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Having been appointed to the Agriculture and Fisheries portfolio late in 2002 as business planning was already underway, I was struck by the scope of challenges and opportunities facing the department and the agricultural and fishing industries. Economic growth, the environment, food safety, education and training are the primary issues that will affect these resource sectors in the coming years. The department, through the 2003-04 Business Plan, has set out strategic priorities and key initiatives for addressing these challenges and seizing emerging opportunities in accordance with its legislated mandate.

As we enter the new business year, the department is engaged in policy initiatives that will shape the future of our agriculture and fishing industries. The Agricultural Policy Framework (APF) was signed in June 2002 by federal, provincial and territorial governments and sets a strategic policy framework for agriculture over the next five years. This umbrella accord establishes a common action plan for international competitiveness and continued growth by centering on five strategic pillars: environment, food safety and food quality, science and innovation, renewal, and business risk management. These pillars support a Brand Canada Initiative, which positions the Canadian industry as a world leader in food quality.

Implementation of the APF will commence in fiscal 2003-04.

Nova Scotia continues to benefit from a strong commercial fishery, which is vital to the economy of our coastal communities. In the next year, the department will continue participating in a national Fisheries Policy Review, which will set the direction for long-term management of marine resources, including aquaculture. The Aquaculture Policy Framework more specifically sets the long-term vision for Canada's aquaculture industry and the department will continue to work with DFO to move this important sector forward focusing on environmental monitoring and development of a new National Aquatic Animal Health Program. Nova Scotia prides itself on its sportfishery, and the department is working with its federal counterpart to develop MOUs on freshwater fish habitat and recreational fisheries.

I am confident that the committed staff of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries will work with government and industry partners to meet the challenging priorities set out in the 2003-04 business plan.

Gordon Balser

◆ MESSAGE FROM DEPUTY MINISTER

Economic growth is a common thread running through the agriculture and fishing industries, the department's core businesses and is also a unifying factor between our programs and services. With this in mind, the department initiated a process in 2002 to develop a Signature Strategy. This strategy will position the agriculture and fisheries sectors in the Government's broad economic growth agenda and articulate the role of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Government, industry and communities are coming together to define Nova Scotia's economic landscape. In addition to the Government's economic growth strategy *Opportunities For Prosperity*, Nova Scotia has also released *Innovation Nova Scotia*, a strategy for growing innovation in Nova Scotia. At the national level, Canada's Oceans Strategy, supported by the Fisheries Policy Review, sets out the direction for the long-term management of our marine resources. The federal Aquaculture Policy Framework provides an enabling policy support for this growing sector in Canada. The Agriculture Policy Framework presents an architecture for agricultural policy for the 21st century. As well, the Nova Scotia agriculture industry has released a discussion paper that summaries major trends, challenges and future opportunities.

Nova Scotia has launched the *Skills Nova Scotia Framework* initiative aimed at better coordinating skill development activities to support employment and create a responsive labour force prepared to deal with work in the changing economy.

With this convergence of interest, exciting opportunities exist to address sustained economic prosperity for Nova Scotia. The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, along with its partners, wants to share the leadership role in setting the course for agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture.

I look forward to making significant progress on these and other priorities in 2003-04.

Peter Underwood

◆ MISSION

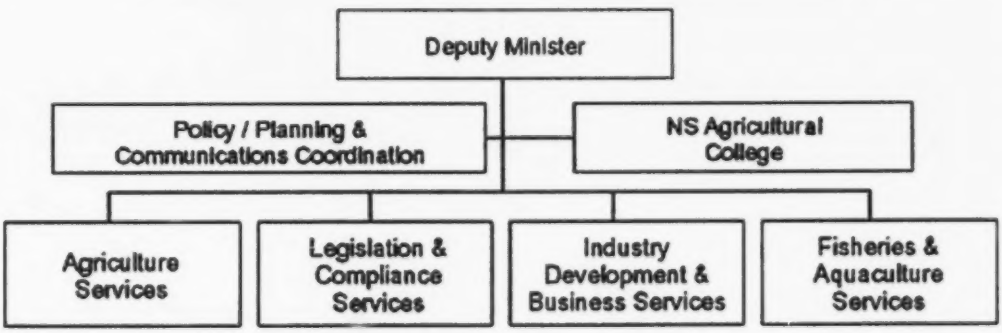
To foster prosperous and sustainable agriculture and fisheries industries through the delivery of quality public services for the betterment of rural and coastal communities and of all Nova

Scotians.

◆ PLANNING CONTEXT

The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries has a legislated mandate to promote, support and develop the agricultural and fishing industries, recognizing that these two sectors are economic engines of Nova Scotia's rural and coastal communities. The department is structured to service the needs of the two sectors, consisting of four 'service areas', a centralized policy, planning and communications division, and the NS Agricultural College.

NS Agriculture and Fisheries Organizational Structure



Agriculture Services provides regional agricultural services; land protection; environmental management including integrated pest management; 4-H and rural organizations; agricultural awareness; farm and industry development programs; risk management; crop and livestock insurance; and orderly production and supply of some of Nova Scotia's major farm products.

Fisheries and Aquaculture Services provides advisory, coastal zone management and field services to the commercial fishery. It also provides assistance with development of innovative technologies and manages the aquaculture, inland fisheries and rockweed resources.

Legislation and Compliance Services coordinates the legislative and regulatory frameworks under which programs and services are delivered and monitors compliance with established regulatory practices. The branch also licenses fish plants/ buyers, meat processing, retail food outlets and restaurants, fur and game farms, and is responsible for enforcement of regulations governing licensed operations.

Industry Development and Business Services integrates marketing, product and quality development, business management and economic development services, and two business development agencies: the Farm Loan Board and the Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board.

Policy, Planning and Communications provides corporate coordination and support to departmental policy, planning and communications activities in fulfillment of the department's mission and broad government priorities.

NS Agricultural College provides education and training to the agricultural, agri-food and aquaculture industries. Working in co-operation with industry and government, the NSAC research department is a centre of agricultural expertise throughout Atlantic Canada.

3.1 Employees and Locations

The department, including the NSAC, currently has a total staff complement of 517.6 full time

equivalents (FTE). Staff are located in Halifax, Truro, Kentville, Pictou, at two fish hatchery sites in Queen's and Antigonish Counties, and in regional agriculture and fisheries offices around the province.

3.2 Value of Industry

Agriculture and fisheries have been identified as vital economic contributors in the province's Economic Growth Strategy, "*Opportunities For Prosperity*." These two sectors, including aquaculture and recreational fishing, employ some 28,000 Nova Scotians and contribute some $2 billion to the provincial economy. Another 46,000 indirect jobs are created in food wholesale, retail and food service sectors. In 2001, there were 3,923 census farms enumerated in NS, which produced $421 million in farm cash receipts. The agri-food sector inclusive of processing contributes $660 million to provincial GDP. Seafood continues to be a major Nova Scotia export posting a new record of over $1 billion in 2001.

3.3 Challenges and Opportunities

Industry growth and development: Agriculture and fisheries are recognized as foundation industries and play a key role in advancing the Government's broad economic growth agenda particularly in the areas of business development, entrepreneurship, exports, new investment, innovation and research, and value-added. There is a convergence of interest in the economic growth agenda and it is important that government and industry work in partnership to address long-term prosperity for Nova Scotia.

The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries needs to be part of that partnership, as well as play a leadership role in setting a course for economic prosperity for NS's rural and coastal communities.

Environmental issues: Sustainable resource development and management of water resources continue to challenge the industry and the department. Progress was made in 2002-03 in a number of areas, notably water and farm nutrient management, climate change research, environmental assessments for agricultural and aquaculture farms, and inland fisheries. However, these efforts are long-term and work will continue in 2003-04. Other environmental challenges relate to resource conflicts involving offshore oil and gas development and animal health as it relates to aquaculture. As the department addresses these, and other challenges, it is seeking innovative solutions and taking advantage of opportunities in applied research, new technology and adaptation of best practices to ensure that agriculture, aquaculture and fishing are conducted in a socially and environmentally responsible fashion.

Food safety continues to be a major policy thrust of the department as it moves toward implementation of a new integrated Food Safety System that will address the food continuum from primary production through processing to consumer purchasing at the retail level. There is a growing demand from the public and markets for high quality, safe food. To respond to this trend, the department must address issues of production and product standards, food labeling and traceability, monitoring and inspection, bio-security protocols, food handling education, and analytical testing. Implementing an integrated Food Safety System will enable Nova Scotia to brand its food products as meeting high standards of quality and safety, which will sharpen its competitive edge in both domestic and export markets.

Education and training will continue to be a focus for 2003-04 particularly as the Government addresses labour market needs through the *Skills NS Framework* initiative. This initiative will provide ongoing opportunities for Nova Scotians to keep their skills current and responsive to changes in the labour market. The NS Agricultural College (NSAC) will continue to play an important role in providing quality education and training for the agri-food industry. The college's recently developed strategic plan, "*Looking Outward - Embracing Change*" sets the stage for addressing modern challenges including an evolving labour force, excellence in

academic programming, resource management and the environment, research and innovation, and globalization.

◆ STRATEGIC GOALS

Agriculture and Fisheries is committed to supporting the Government of Nova Scotia's corporate goals and priorities:

- Healthy Nova Scotians - improve service delivery, and build the foundation for the future and respond to urgent priority needs;
- Educated and Confident Nova Scotians - focus on the 'basics', and support for students in the early years;
- Self-sufficient and Prosperous - support the foundation for economic growth, ensure the participation of all Nova Scotians, and engender confidence in our ability to prosper.

In accordance with its mission and legislated mandate, the department will strive to achieve:

1. Sustainable and environmentally responsible development of Nova Scotia's agriculture and fishing industries;

2. A competitive business climate that encourages economic growth and increases jobs in Nova Scotia's rural and coastal communities;

3. Orderly development of agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries through a regulatory regime which supports business and sector growth and development, and which ensures consumer confidence and food safety;

4. Globally competitive NS workforce through education, training, research and community services;

5. Public services that are accountable and serve to meet identified industry needs.

◆ CORE BUSINESSES

1. Sustainable resource management - balances industry development with environmental and social responsibility through applied research, technology transfer, generally accepted management practices, and industry/ public awareness.

Departmental activities in this core business are designed to move our agriculture and fishing industries closer to a state where the three principals of sustainability - economically viable, environmentally sound and socially acceptable -- are in balance. In order to get there, the department will work with industry to promote standards of environmental stewardship among business operators. The department will also work to ensure that freshwater fish stocks and habitat are well managed and sufficiently protected so that anglers and nature lovers can continue to enjoy Nova Scotia's natural beauty. Education will be key in raising industry's awareness of environmental issues and the public's appreciation of the resource industries. Together, these efforts will help to sustain prosperity in agriculture, aquaculture, the fishery, and secure the future of the communities that rely on these industries.

Major program/ activities encompass:

- Agriculture resource stewardship and advisory services including
  - agriculture field services,
  - land protection,

- integrated pest management,
- environmental farm planning (soil, nutrient and manure management),

- 'AgraPoint' - an alternative mechanism for delivering extension and advisory services to the agriculture sector,
- Water resource management for the agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries sectors,
- Aquaculture development and extension services,
- Inland fisheries resource management,
- Marine advisory services, field services and coastal zone management.

2. Industry growth and development - focuses on NS's rural and coastal communities by investing in industry stability, new economic opportunities and strategic development partnerships.

Today's business climate is highly dynamic and increasingly globalized. Industry needs to be responsive to global trends in order to remain competitive. NS's Agriculture and fisheries industries have been evolving and adapting to broad trends - moving from a focus on primary production toward increased diversity in primary production, value-added, greater export value, and a strong base in scientific research, technology and innovation. Programs and services in this core business area are designed to assist NS's agricultural and fishing industries compete effectively in a highly competitive and global marketplace. The department assists industry seize opportunities to innovate, diversify, add value and improve the quality of their products. Tourism is important to Nova Scotia and the department is enhancing the sportfishing sector and looking at new opportunity areas, such as agri/ aqua tourism. At the same time, the department recognizes the importance of stability in the business environment so that industry can manage risk and carry out long-range planning.

Major program/ activities include:

- Integrated risk management programs to support income stabilization in the agriculture sector,
- Sector investment including credit and financing services,
- Industry development including:
  - Development of new commercial fisheries,
  - Marketing and trade services,
  - Product development and quality evaluation, including value-added production,
  - Business management and economic analyses,
  - Freshwater fish stocking,

- Research, technology and innovation development for the agri-food, fishery and aquaculture industries through public/ private partnerships.

3. Responsible governance - focuses on the orderly development of the industries through supportive legislative / regulatory frameworks including licensing and leasing of developmental operations.

Department efforts in this core business area are directed toward developing a legislative and regulatory environment that supports business, protects consumers, and minimizes impacts to the environment from resource development activity. To achieve this long-range goal, the department ensures that legislation and regulations enable business development, that they are consistent and treat businesses equitably, and that they are not unnecessarily burdensome for business operators. An effective regulatory climate must also protect consumers and help to ensure safe food. To this end, the department supports better product labeling, traceability, and adoption of recognized standards of food quality. Initiatives aimed at promoting proper food handling will minimize the risk of food-borne illnesses and increase consumer confidence

in commercial food establishments and among the general public. Illegal fishing activities undermine the livelihood of legitimate commercial fish harvesters, and the department will continue to work with federal partners to address this pressing issue. The department licenses and leases activities in aquaculture development and marine plant harvesting.

Major programs/ activities include:

- Enforcement of regulations governing licensed operations and mandated activities,
- Legislative and information management services,
- Licensing of fish plants and buyers, retail food outlets and restaurants,
- Issuance of agricultural permits and licenses (fur and game farms), and farm registration,
- Licensing and management of marine plants,
- Aquaculture licensing/ leasing,
- Coordination of regulated marketing boards for the agriculture sector
- Evaluation of food quality and safety,
- Animal health and disease prevention.

4. Life long learning (education, training, skill development) - focuses on sustaining expertise and excellence in NS's agricultural, agri-food and aquaculture industries, and preparing Nova Scotians for a global labour market through teaching, research and community services.

The department, through the NS Agriculture College, offers a broad range of post secondary educational programs, training and research for the agriculture and aquaculture industries. The NSAC is the centre of agriculture research and innovation for the Atlantic region. Major focus areas for academic and applied research include climate change, organic farming, product quality enhancement, water quality and resource management, soil and farm waste management. The NSAC is unique in its work on bio-products, potato, blueberry, carrot and fur animal (mink) research, which it conducts in partnership with the private sector. These and other activities are vital for stability and sustained growth in our agriculture and aquaculture sectors. The 4-H program focuses on agricultural awareness and provides rural youth with leadership and other life-long skills development.

◆ PRIORITIES

Core Business #1: Sustainable resource management

Priority -- Strengthen environmental risk management:

This priority focuses on strengthening the ability of client groups to deal with environment issues and reduce risks as they pertain to resource development. This is a long-range effort that involves scientific research, development and application of innovative technology, as well as adaption of best practices and recognized standards. The APF, which will be implemented in fiscal 2003-04, provides the framework for addressing environmental risk management as it relates to agriculture.

Strategic actions include:

- Accelerate Environmental Farm Planning (EFP) in accordance with the broader Agriculture Policy Framework Implementation Agreement. The EFP builds on scientific research and innovative technology, and incorporates nutrient management planning, revised manure management guidelines, and on-farm water management;
- Apply climate change research that has been underway at NSAC to the farm level by

encouraging adoption of new technology and best practices aimed at meeting targets of green house gas reductions;
- Implement the Environmental Monitoring Plan for the aquaculture sector in conjunction with the Aquaculture Association of NS;
- Participate in the development of a new National Aquatic Animal Health Program for the aquaculture sector and participate on a joint project with UPEI to graduate new fish veterinarians;
- Encourage adoption of environmental farm management by strengthening the linkages between departmental programs and agriculture practices.

Priority -- Resolve resource use conflicts and challenges:

The department will continue efforts to balance the needs of the agricultural and aquaculture sectors for access to water resources with concerns of sportfishing, wildlife and community groups. There continues to be a need to address concerns from the commercial fishery regarding oil and gas development in offshore and near-shore waters.

Activities to meet this priority include:

- Implement phase 2 of the Water Management Strategy designed to address issues of water quality and quantity for both the agriculture and fishery sectors;

- Organize a fact-finding mission with Department of Energy and industry representatives to country(ies) that have a successful fishery and oil/ gas industry to learn from their experience;

Priority -- Enhance public awareness of industries:

Agriculture and fisheries work in a highly dynamic business environment that requires an ability to evolve and modernize with changing times. In addition to marketing initiatives to promote NS seafood and agri-food product, the department is engaged in activities to increase public awareness of the importance of agriculture and fisheries to NS's economy.

In fiscal 2003 - 2004, the department will:

- Partner to implement strategies that increase public awareness and appreciation of agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries, including the Brand NS Initiative, Taste of NS Programs, annual Aquaculture Harvest Festival, 4-H and agricultural awareness activities;
- Continue to engage in sustainable community initiatives with coastal and rural communities through its regional field services;

Priority --Manage inland fisheries resources:

The department will continue to manage this resource according to principles of conservation with the objective of improving opportunities for recreational fishing and protecting stocks for long-term sustainability.

Actions for 2003-04 include:

- Finalize two federal/ provincial MOUs on freshwater fish habitat and recreational fisheries;

Major partnering links

Federal: Fisheries & Oceans Canada, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Environment Canada, Northern and Indian Affairs, and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency;

Provincial/ municipal/ interprovincial: Natural Resources, Environment and Labour, Office of Economic Development, Justice, Health, Consumer Services and Municipal Relations, municipal agencies, Atlantic provincial governments;

Industry/ NGOs: NS Federation of Agriculture, Agricultural Commodity Groups, Seafood Producers Association of NS, NS Fish Packers Association, Aquaculture Association of NS, commercial fishermen's associations, sportfishery associations, private veterinary practitioners, community groups.

Core Business #2: Industry growth and development

Priority -- Develop a strategic plan focused on economic growth:

In 2002-03, the department initiated planning to develop a 'signature strategy' to build on NS's economic growth strategy, "*Opportunities For Prosperity*" and enhance the component related to sustainable resource development as these relate to agriculture and fisheries. The work undertaken in 2002-03 has assisted in the preparation of the 2003-04 Business Plan and branch operational plans. Work will continue on this initiative in 2003-04. The final strategic document will incorporate and support the priorities described below.

Priority -- Reduce and manage agricultural risks:

This priority focuses on improving long-term stability and self-sufficiency in the agriculture sector by strengthening the capacity of the agricultural industry to reduce and manage risks more strategically including market, environmental, financial and weather-related risks. The five strategic pillars of the Agriculture Policy Framework (APF) Agreement - Environment, Business Risk Management, Food Safety and Food Quality, Renewal, Science and Innovation - work together to enhance industry's ability to better manage risks.

Actions for fiscal 2003-04:

- Implement the APF Agreement through a formal signing of a federal/ provincial APF Implementation Agreement. The agreement includes a new generation of Business Risk Management Program designed to reduce and manage risks impacting income and crop production.

Priority -- Advocate for a fair share of marine resources for NS:

Canada's marine resources are managed by the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). Agriculture and Fisheries advocates for NS's interests through participation on interjurisdictional committees and government/ industry resource advisory groups. The department participates on national policy initiatives addressing the oceans and fishery resources. It maintains an ongoing working relationship with DFO, other provincial Fisheries and Aquaculture departments and the NS fishing industry to address issues of resource access and management. These and other activities have led to increased access to resources such as snow crab, as well as development of new fisheries for silver hake, Jonah crab, and sharks.

Activities for 2003-04 include:

- Participate in a review of northern cod resources and prepare contingency plans if this fishery is closed due to poor stock recovery;

Priority -- Diversify, expand, add value in primary and secondary production:

This priority supports the potential for new economic opportunities and is key to achieving the goal of industry growth and job creation. The department works with industry partners to design and implement projects that will expand, diversify and add value to NS products and services.

Activities for fiscal 2003-04 include:

- Work with government and industry partners to implement strategies aimed at development of value-added, organic farming (with emphasis on pork, apples), NS wine, and tree fruit sector;
- Pursue new opportunities for expanded snow crab processing in Cape Breton and aquaculture development in Guysborough County;
- Work with the Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers (CCFAM) on national efforts to promote sportfishing and establish a national marketing campaign with industry partners ("Catch Fish");
- Complete 20 joint government/ industry initiatives which address targeted barriers to commercialization and new product development;
- Implement a new business strategy for AgriTech Park positioning this facility as a bio-economy village focused on environment, food safety, and science and innovation;
- Continue life-science research at the NSAC on development of new 'functional foods';
- Implement the Entrepreneurial and Opportunities Development Initiative as part of the APF Agreement. This initiative is designed to improve business management and planning skills in the agriculture sector through training and other services.

Priority -- Increase domestic and export sales:

Exporting offers substantial opportunities for growth. NS's proximity to the highly lucrative US market gives it a clear advantage. However, the department is working with industry to grow export markets around the world. Although NS has a relatively small internal market, there are opportunities to increase sales of NS seafood and agri-food products domestically. Seamless access to marketing/ trade information and technical expertise is becoming increasingly important for clients, and the department needs to look at opportunities for optimizing its resources to better service the industries.

Activities for 2003-04 include:

- Advance the 'Brand NS' initiative, which will include building on the success of 'Taste of NS' Programs and implementation of six pilot projects;
- Continue development and implementation of federal and provincial market/ trade strategies with industry stakeholders targeting North East USA, European Union, Japan and China;
- Complete and enhance the pilot international business and product development project for the Japanese market;
- Continue to build on the success of NS's boat building industry and increase export sales;
- Lead and evaluate 25 market development projects in domestic and international markets;
- Develop and increase opportunities for sale in the domestic food service market with an emphasis on public sector purchasing agencies and groups;
- Complete the Cumberland County Food in Schools Pilot Program;

Priority -- Optimize department's investment capacity in accordance with 'NS

Investment Framework':

This priority addresses the need to optimize the department's investment capacity and improve our ability to evaluate and manage investment opportunities including those related to innovation and revitalization. This needs to be done in accordance with the 'NS Investment Framework', which sets out a strategic approach that clusters resources to enhance effectiveness.

Activities to meet this priority include:

- Implement the new 'Investment Plan for NS's Agri-food and Fisheries Sectors';
- Implement the New Opportunities Business Development and Investment Initiative as part of the APF Agreement. This initiative is designed to increase strategic investment in the agriculture sector;
- Increase the department's capacity to provide timely, comprehensive economic analyses of business and investment opportunities for both the agriculture and fisheries sectors;
- Continue to provide lending services through the Farm Loan Board and the Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board, and implement an enhanced financial management system for the two boards;
- Continue the New Entrants to Agriculture Loan Program;
- Implement the new Market Opportunity Loan Programs for the beef and NS tree fruit Industry aimed at revitalizing these sectors;

Major Linkages

Federal: Canadian Farm Business Management Council, Dept of Foreign Affairs & Internal Trade (DFAIT)/ Industry Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada; Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), Investment Partnerships Canada, Trade Team NS/ Canada.

Provincial/ municipal/ interprovincial: Tourism and Culture, Economic Development , NS Business Inc., Environment and Labour, Atlantic provincial governments, regional tourism and development agencies, municipal agencies.

Industry/ NGOs: NS Federation of Agriculture, Atlantic Trade Partnership, Canadian Council of Grocery Distributers, fish processor associations, NS Boat Builders Association, Aquaculture Association of NS, Taste of Nova Scotia Programs, restaurant and food services associations and groups, Atlantic Canada Organic Regional Network (ACORN), agricultural associations and groups, financial institutions and agencies, consumer groups.

Core Business # 3: Responsible governance

Priority -- Integrated Food Safety Program:

This priority focuses on the need to provide a quality evaluation service for industry in the areas of product standards, food safety, education, research and analytical testing.

Activities include:

- Assist with the implementation of the 'Food Safety' pillar of the APF Agreement including the Regulatory Compliance Food and Farm Safety Program, aimed at enhancing industry compliance with standards and best practices;
- Revise and improve the Meat Inspection Program to meet growing public expectations

for food and meat inspection;
- Implement an MOU on food safety signed with Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) in 2002, which will enhance the delivery of food inspection services in NS;
- Implement an MOU with Department of Environment and Labour for laboratory accreditation protocols for testing water, which includes focused scopes of testing under International Standards of Accreditation with the Standards Council of Canada and specializing laboratory services as a centre of excellence to support regulatory and industry demands.

Priority -- Legislation, Information Management, Red Tape Reduction:

Under this priority, the department addresses the need for a regulatory climate that is conducive to business creation and development, and at the same time, ensures the right level of public safety and protection. An effective regulatory climate is critical to a healthy 'business climate' and needs to reflect the principles of the 'Red Tape Reduction' initiative.

Activities for fiscal 2003-04 include:

- Continue to implement recommendations of the Red Tape Reduction Regulatory Review report with a focus on regulations in fiscal 2003-04;
- Continue development of an approved standard for management of departmental records;
- Continue streamlining and transitioning of regulatory responsibilities included under the Dairy Industry Act, the Natural Product Act and the Crop and Livestock Insurance Act;
- Complete review of Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act and regulations.

Priority -- Licensing and issuance of permits:

This functional area encompasses a suite of programs that include licensing of seafood processors and buyers, retail food outlets, restaurants, aquaculture, rockweed harvesting, and registration of agriculture farms. These program are subject to continual improvements as the industries evolve.

Focus of activities for 2003-04 include:

- Implement a revised fish processor and fish buyer license policy including internal improvements to support new policy;

Priority -- Investigation and Enforcement:

Investigation and enforcement are key to ensuring an effective regulatory system and to maintaining orderly development of industry. In 2003-04, the department will continue to focus considerable attention on the fishery sector, particularly:

- Implementation of a new Fisheries Enforcement Strategy to address illegal fishing, buying and selling activities, which includes collaboration with federal and provincial agencies, increased staffing, and training;

Major Linkages

Federal: Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Canada Customs and Revenue Agency; Health Canada, RCMP;

Provincial/ municipal/ interprovincial: Environment and Labour, Department Natural

Resources (DNR) and Health

Industry/ NGOs: NS Federation of Agriculture, Atlantic Dairy Livestock Improvement Corporation (ADLIC), Society for Prevention of Cruelty (SPC), NS Food Safety, Quality Management Program (QMP) Umbrella.

Core Business # 4: Life long learning (Education, training, skill development)

Priority -- Increase NSAC research capacity:

This priority recognizes the importance of the NSAC as the centre of agricultural education, research and innovation for Atlantic Canada. This priority provides critical support to the department's economic growth agenda.

In fiscal 2003-04, the department will:

- Establish new researcher positions in aquaculture nutrition, organic farming and fruit by-product development;
- Implement the new Canada Research Chair in Agriculture Resource Management as part of the Canada Research Chairs Program;
- Implement the Technology / Research Training Initiative under the APF aimed at increasing the long-term innovative capacity of NS's agri-food sector. This will be achieved through the NSAC by training highly qualified personnel at the graduate level.

Priority -- Leaders in a globalized food system:

Increase the capacity to become leaders in a globalized food system.

Action:

- NSAC will participate in an international exchange project with Jamaica, funded through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA);

Priority -- Respond to emerging job opportunities:

Seek opportunities to further diversify NSAC curriculum to respond to new opportunities in life sciences, environmental engineering and biology, agricultural business, new and value-added product development, and aquaculture.

To meet this priority, the NSAC will:

- review and revise where appropriate, academic and continuing education programs to ensure educational programs meet the needs of students and perspective employers.

Priority -- 4-H Leadership development:

Through the department's 4-H program, NS youth are provided with opportunities to develop leadership and other life-long learning skills.

Activities for 2003-04 include:

- Promotion of 4-H as the organization of choice for rural youth through many avenues including a partnership with the Canadian 4-H Council, 90th anniversary of 4-H in

Canada, promotions and celebrations;
- Participation in the next four phases of the National Ispos Reid Measures of Success!!

Priority -- Fishery professionalization:

Work with government partners and industry groups to improve professional and safety standards in commercial fish harvesting sector. This initiative will entail consultation with stakeholders and possible development of a formal agreement.

Major Linkages

Federal/ international: national and international academic institutions, Canadian and international research institutes, international development agencies, ACOA, DFO;

Provincial/ municipal/ interprovincial: NS Department of Education, Agriculture and Fisheries;

Industry/ NGOs: NS Federation of Agriculture, Aquaculture Association of NS, Atlantic Universities and food institutes, InNovacorp, fish harvesting organizations.

◆ BUDGET CONTEXT

Department of Agriculture & Fisheries - Estimated Budget Expenditures by Core Business		
	Forecast 2002\03 (Per 2003\04 Estimates Book)	Budget 2003\04 (Per 2003\04 Estimates Book)
	$ Millions	$Millions
Total Program Expenses - Gross Current	$60.4	$58.1
Net Program Expenses - Net of Recoveries	$40.6	$40.1
Salaries and Benefits	$26.2	$27.6
Funded Staff (FTEs)	513.3	517.6

* The net adjustment of approximately +3 FTE's for 03/04 is chiefly the result of rounding in casual funding and the addition of a Canada Research chair, which is 100% recoverable to NSDAF.

The total FTE's for 2003/2004, of 517.6 include 6 FTE's which are funded by external Agencies.

◆ HUMAN RESOURCES

The Corporate Services Unit - Resources HR will continue to provide ongoing advice and assistance in organizational design, labor relations issues, HR administration and planning, staff training, Disability Case Management, and OH&S. Continued emphasis will be placed on addressing succession planning, a challenge that was identified in 2002-03 Business Plan. To this end, the CSU- Resources HR will assist the department in:

- coordinating the Succession Planning Initiative (steps 1-4 complete in 02-03, steps 5&6,

from the point of receipt of applications from interested employees will be complete in 03-04) and Performance Management processes within the Department. This includes providing ongoing consultative support to managers, as well as analytical and planning support to the Department through out the process. Career planning will be provided in conjunction with the initiative;

◆ INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The Corporate Services Unit - Resources IT will assist the department design and implement a new integrated and enhanced financial management system for the NS Farm Loan Board and the Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board. Realization of this priority will require cooperation of Department of Finance. This priority has also been identified as an action item under Core Business #2: Optimize department's investment capacity in accordance with 'NS Investment Framework'.

◆ OUTCOMES/ PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Core Business 1: Sustainable Resource Management				
Outcome	**Measure**	**Data**	**Target-2004/05**	**Strategies to Achieve Target**
Viable agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture sectors	Percent of registered farmers participating in the NS Federation of Agriculture's Environmental Plan initiative	Year 2000/01 4%	20%	Accelerate Environmental Farm Planning (EFP) in accordance with the broader Agriculture Policy Framework Implementation Agreement. The EFP builds on scientific research and innovative technology, and incorporates nutrient management planning, revised manure management guidelines, and on-farm water management.
	Dollar value and number of research projects awarded	Year 2001/02 $1.8 million for 128 research projects	Increase value & # of research projects	Continue to work with industry and other stakeholder partners to identify and undertake research of both applied and theoretical focus. Implement the new Canada Research Chairs aimed at addressing water resource management and continue NSAC research on climate change. Work with partner organizations to address water, soil and changes impacting on agriculture, aquaculture, and rural communities. Continue life-science research at NSAC on development of new 'functional foods.'
	Value of gross aquaculture output	Year 2001 $40.0 million	% Increase	Implement the Environmental Monitoring Plan for the aquaculture sector in conjunction with the Aquaculture Association

				of NS. Participate on development of a new National Aquatic Animal Health Program for the aquaculture and on a joint project with UPEI to develop new fish veterinarians.
	Dollar value sport fishing activities to the province % change in sport fishing licencessold	Year 2000 $85.0 million 4% increase from 1999	% Increase value % Increase	Finalize two federal/ provincial MOUs on freshwater fish habitat and recreational fisheries Work within CCFAM on national efforts to promote sports fishing., establish national marketing campaign with industry partners (Catch Fishing).

Core Business 2: Industry Growth and Development				
Outcome	**Measure**	**Data**	**Target 2004/05**	**Strategies to Achieve Target**
Economic growth and prosperity in rural and coastal communities	Dollar value total capital expenditures agriculture and fisheries (million)	Year 2000 $91.8 ($41. agriculture, $50.8 fisheries)	% Change / increase total capital expenditures	Continue to provide lending services through the Farm Loan Board and the Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board, and proceed with an enhanced financial management system for the two boards.
	Value agriculture production (million) Value of fish landings (million) Primary Value of agriculture and fisheries (million) Value boat building (million)	Year 2000 $408,233. $647,673. $1,055,906. $50.	% Change increase % Change increase % Change increase % Change increase	Continue to track industry performance through collection, analysis, and reporting of economic indicators available to the department. Implement the new 'Investment Plan for NS's Agri-food and Fisheries Sectors'. Complete inventory of business development and investment programs and review sector best practices. Continue to build on the success of NS's boat building industry and increase export sales.
	Value of	Year 1999 $1,837,281.	% Change	Implement a new Value-added Strategy for the

	shipments food manufacturers (million)		increase	agriculture and fishery sectors
	Food manufacturing value- added (million)	670,266.	% Change increase	
	Value-added shipments ratio	36.5:1	Increase in ratio	
	Nova Scotia total value-added food manufacturing industry as a % of Canada	3%	Increase in %	
	Value fish and fish exports (million)	Year 2000 $1,086.8	% Change increase	Continue development and implementation of federal and provincial market/ trade strategies with industry stakeholders targeting North East USA, European Union, Japan and China
	Value food, beverages, & agriculture products (million)	$166.0	% Change increase	
	Total value exports agriculture and fisheries (million)	$1,252.8	% Change increase	Lead and evaluate 25 market development projects in domestic and international markets.

Core Business 3: Responsible Governance

Outcome	Measure	Data	Target 2004/05	Strategies to Achieve Target
Responsible & responsive legislative environment	Number participants in food safety training courses	Year 2001 2, 829 professional, 761 volunteer food handlers, and 35 milk graders	Sustain or increase # participants	Assist with the implementation of the 'Food Safety' pillar of the APF Agreement including the Regulatory Compliance Food and Farm Safety Program, aimed at enhancing industry compliance with standards and best practices;
	Number of site inspections	11, 615	Increase #	
	Number of consumer complaints requiring investigation of food safety issues	432	Decrease #	Implement MOU with CFIA on food safety signed in 2002
	Revision/review of department's legislative/	Year 2000/01 1(minimum) *Marshland Conservation*	4 completed	Continue to work with industry, and applicable governments to develop,

	regulatory framework	*Act*		implement, and revise legislative/ regulatory instruments. Continue to implement the recommendations of the Red Tape Reduction Regulatory Review Report

Core Business 4: Education, training, skill development and life long learning				
Outcome	**Measure**	**Data**	**Target** **2004/05**	**Strategies to Achieve Target**
Highly-skilled, internationally competitive workforce.	Ratio of career opportunities to number of graduating students	Year 2000 3:1	Sustained or increased ratio	Continue to provide quality academic programs that reflect the needs of acompetitive employment environment. Continue a recruitment program for students in targeted markets where the educational programs offered by the NSAC meet the needs of the student and perspective employers.
	Number & dollar value of applied and theoretical research awarded Number of faculty involved in research	Year 2000 287 projects with value of $ 2.3 million 32	Sustained or increase in # and dollar value Sustained or increase	Continue to enhance research capacity through participation in the Canada Research Chairs Program and other partnerships in support of research professorships. Establish new researcher positions in aquaculture nutrition, organic farming and fruit by-product development. Continue to provide academic excellence in recruiting and retaining graduate students in agriculture and aquaculture disciplines.
Community leadership capacity in youth as an investment for leaders of the future	Number of 4H members % change between pre and post knowledge survey of learning events / opportunities	Year 2001 2500 25% increase	Sustain # Increase %	Promote 4-H as the organization of choice for Rural youth through many avenues including a partnership with the Canadian 4-H Council , 90th anniversary of 4-H in Canada promotions and celebrations. Survey our stakeholders to ensure our product is providing exactly what is most developmental for young Nova Scotians.

For more information, contact the Agriculture and Fisheries. Last updated: April 1, 2003
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